

**Crossroads Program
Policies and Procedures**

Service Chapter 401-01

**North Dakota Department of Human Services
600 East Boulevard Dept. 325
Bismarck, ND 58505-0250**

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Definitions 401-01-05

(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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Child Care Provider – An individual 18 years of age or older; licensed, registered, self declared, approved relative, or registered by a Tribe who provides child care.

County Agency – The county social service board.

County Crossroads Worker – An employee of the county social service office who is responsible for accepting and processing the Crossroads Program Application and ensuring payment of the child care costs are made through the Child Care Assistance Program.

Crossroads Case Manager – An employee of an agency or staff person responsible for monitoring a Crossroads participant's educational activities and assisting the individual with other related needs to achieve their educational and parental goals.

Department - The North Dakota Department of Human Services.

Education Plan – A plan developed between the parent, the Crossroads Case Manager, and if necessary, the education facility that:

- Defines the parent's short and long term goals,
- Describes the barriers the parent may have that may result in the parent not attaining their goal,
- Outlines how the parent will attain their goal,

- Provides an estimated graduation date,
- Describes the progress the parent has made since the previous Education Plan was developed,
- Provides the reason for the child care needs (e.g. education, work, education and work, parenting classes)
- Provides a calculation used to determine their transportation assistance, if needed.

GED (General Education Diploma or General Equivalency Diploma) –

A high-school degree awarded after successful completion of a series of examinations instead of attendance in a traditional classroom setting.

Parent - A child's mother or father who is 20 years of age or younger and who has primary responsibility for the care of his/her child.

NOTE: Eligibility continues through the month prior to the month the mother or father attains age 21.

SSI (Supplemental Security Income) - A program administered under Title XVI of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1381 et seq.).

Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) - A program available for a limited time for families where deprivation exists for the child(ren) and income is insufficient to meet the needs of the family. This includes Transition Assistance provided to families for up to 6 months to qualified TANF households.

**Crossroads Legal Authority and Program Philosophy
401-01-10**

Authority Reference 401-01-10-05

(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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Section 50-33, [North Dakota Century Code](#)

Purpose/Philosophy 401-01-10-10

(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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The Crossroads Program provides child care and transportation assistance for eligible parents who are age 20 years or under and is pursuing high school, [GED](#) or alternative high school education. The goal of the program is to keep young parents in school, complete a high school level education, with the intent that they will become self-supporting in the future.

The [parent](#) must be attending school on a regular basis. A parent(s) eligible for the Crossroads Program will be referred to a [Crossroads Case Manager](#) who will assist them in the areas of decision making, child care selection, family relationships, parenting skills, housing, school attendance, goal setting and planning for the future, or make a referral to another agency, if necessary.

It is intended that there be close collaboration between the parent, Crossroads Case Manager and school staff in order to facilitate the goal of the parent maintaining regular attendance until graduation.

The Crossroads Program is administered by the Public Assistance Division of the [Department](#) and is a separate program from [Temporary Assistance for Needy Families \(TANF\)](#).

Administrative Requirements 401-01-15

Confidentiality 401-01-15-05

(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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State law recognizes the privacy rights of individuals who receive services and assistance under programs administered by the [Department](#). Information concerning households receiving assistance through the Crossroads Program may be released only for the purposes directly connected with the administration of the Economic Assistance Programs, Medicaid and Healthy Steps.

For further information regarding confidentiality policies, refer to Manual Section [448-01-25-10-10-30](#) and Service Chapter , Confidentiality, located on the County Intranet in the 'Legal' folder.

Discriminatory Practices Prohibited 401-01-15-10
(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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The North Dakota Department of Human Services and county social service boards, directly or through contractual or other arrangements shall not discriminate against any applicant or recipient on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, age, political believe or handicap.

For additional guidelines, refer to Service Chapter, Non-discrimination to Clients, located on the County Intranet in the 'Legal' folder.

Program Brochures 401-01-15-15
(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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All applicants for the Crossroad Program must be provided the following program brochures:

- [Crossroads Program](#)
- [Child Care Assistance Program](#)
- [WIC](#)

County Crossroads Worker Role and Responsibilities 401-01-15-20

(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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The Role and Responsibility of the [County Crossroads Worker](#) is to:

1. Assist the [parent](#) in identifying and addressing areas of need, and make referrals to services in the community.
2. Ensure the parent is in receipt of or has submitted an application for the Child Care Assistance Program.
3. Ensure the [child care provider](#) is licensed, registered, self-declared or an approved relative.
4. Process reimbursement for child care expenses.
5. Share information with the [Department](#) and [Crossroads Case Manager](#) that is pertinent to the parent's ability to achieve their goals.
6. At the time of review, if the parent does not submit the review form, the County Crossroads Worker contact the parent to determine if their child care need continues.
7. Notify the Public Assistance Division immediately in writing (e-mail, fax, etc.) should the parent complete the high school education, be approved for TANF, drop out of school, or if for any other reason their Child Care Assistance Program would close.

Crossroads Case Manager Role and Responsibilities 401-01-15-25

(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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The Role and Responsibility of the [Crossroads Case Manager](#) is to:

1. Contact the [parent](#) within five (5) working days from the date of the referral to schedule an appointment for him/her to enroll.
2. Meet with the parent within ten (10) working days from the date of the referral regardless of their geographic location within the service area.

NOTE: Due to the age of the parent, this may require a home or school visit and may require the parent of a minor parent to be in attendance.

3. Complete an assessment during the initial interview to determine the parent's goals and specific needs to attain their goals.
4. Develop an [Education Plan](#) with the parent. This may include information received from school personnel. The Education Plan must include:
 - The parent's short and long term goals,
 - Barriers the parent may have that may result in the parent not attaining their goals,
 - An outline of how the parent will attain their goals,
 - Estimated graduation date,
 - The progress the parent has made since the previous Education Plan was developed,

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- The reason for the child care needs (e.g. education, work, education and work parenting classes),
 - A calculation used to determine their transportation assistance.
5. Encourage the parent to enroll and attend parenting classes, if available.
 6. Make appropriate referrals as needed.
 7. Closely monitor participation in education activities and intervene if a participant reduces participation or needs further assistance such as tutoring, transportation, etc. 'Closely monitor' is defined as meeting with the parent at least once per calendar month at a minimum.
 8. Share the Education Plan and other pertinent information with the State Crossroads Policy Staff.
 9. Notify the State Crossroads Policy Staff within five (5) days, when an individual stops participation in education and/or employment.
 10. Complete the evaluations of the parent's progress toward program goals at the end of each semester. Evaluations will be completed for each client utilizing the program in that semester, whether or not they attended school throughout the semester.

NOTE: These evaluations may be completed jointly with school personnel.

Evaluations must be forwarded to the Public Assistance Division of the [Department](#) within fifteen (15) days after the end of the semester being evaluated.

Application and Eligibility 401-01-20

Date of Application and Eligibility Start Date 401-01-20-05

(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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The date of the application is the date the signed [SFN 29](#), Crossroads Program Application is received in the [county agency](#), provided the application was submitted during normal business hours. When an Application is submitted after normal business hours, on a weekend, or on a holiday, the application is considered received the next business day. An unsigned application is not considered an application.

NOTE: The [County Crossroads Worker](#) must document the date an application is filed by recording the date received on the application.

The benefit start date will be the first day of the month the signed application is considered received in the county social service office or the earliest date of eligibility.

A [parent](#) applying for Crossroads must also apply for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP) unless the parent already has an open CCAP case.

NOTE: To ensure child care expenses can be processed for the first month of Crossroads eligibility, the signed CCAP application must be received no later than the last day of the month following the month the individual becomes Crossroads eligible. (Refer to Section [400-28-20-10](#), Date of Application and Benefit Start Date in the CCAP Manual.)

Eligibility Criteria 401-01-20-10

(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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The Crossroads Program is designed to assist with child care and transportation costs for individuals who are:

- Parents up to 21 years of age (prior to the month the [parent](#) turns 21 years of age)
- Parents who are male or female
- Parents who are married or unmarried
- Parents who have the primary responsibility for the care of their child
- Parents who are pursuing high school, [GED](#), or alternative high school
- Eligibility under Crossroads begins the first day of the month in which the Crossroads Program Application is received in the local county social service agency.

Parents must apply for or be in receipt of assistance through the Child Care Assistance Program in order to be eligible for the Crossroads Program.

The child care provider must be licensed, registered, self-declared or an approved relative with the state of North Dakota.

The Crossroads Program does not consider assets or income when determining eligibility.

Eligibility for assistance with payment of child care expenses must be determined using the eligibility criteria defined in the Child Care Assistance Policy manual at [400-28-40](#), Crossroads Families Eligibility.

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A copy of the Crossroads approval letter must be received by the county, which will verify the parent(s) is eligible for Crossroads. The approval letter shows the period of time the parent is eligible for Crossroads.

The only allowable costs that can be paid for individuals eligible for Crossroads are the costs associated with class attendance, employment, and attendance at parenting classes.

NOTE: Costs associated with participation in extracurricular activities cannot be paid.

A child in receipt of Supplemental Security Income ([SSI](#)) may be eligible for Crossroads provided the parent meets the Crossroads eligibility criteria.

When an individual eligible for Crossroads is married or resides with the parent of the child, the individual may be eligible for Crossroads without regard to the activities or income of the spouse or second parent.

A parent, who participated in Crossroads in the previous school period and who intends to participate in Crossroads for the next school period remains eligible for Crossroads during the break if the break is less than a full calendar month. If the break is more than a full calendar month, the individual will remain eligible for Crossroads coverage during the break if the parent is working or attending parenting classes during the school break. At the time it is learned that the individual will not be returning to school, eligibility for Crossroads ends.

Example #1: Mom age 17 has 1 child. Mom is attending high school in December; mom has a three week break from school due to the holidays. Mom will resume attendance in January after the break. If during the break mom incurs child care due to employment and parenting classes, mom remains Crossroads eligible and the child care costs can be paid by the Child Care Assistance Program as the mom is considered Crossroads eligible throughout the break.

Example #2: Mom age 16 has 1 child. She attends grade 11 in high school and is employed part time. School term ends in May and mom will return to school in August. Since mom will return to school in August, she will remain eligible for Crossroads and her child care costs, while employed can be paid under the Child Care Assistance Program as Crossroads.

Example #3: Mom is age 16 and has 1 child. She attends high school and is in the 11th grade. School ends May and she is not employed and not seeking employment. She plans on returning to school in August. Since mom will not have a child care need during the summer, her Crossroads case must be closed at the end of May.

In July, mom reports she obtained employment and needs assistance with her child care costs. Mom will need to complete a new Crossroads Program Application (and the Child Care Assistance Program Application if the case was closed). Her child care costs can be paid by the Child Care Assistance Program as Crossroads since she will be returning to school in August.

NOTE: If she will not return to school in August, she is not eligible for Crossroads; however, she may continue to be eligible for the Child Care Assistance Program if all other eligibility criteria for the Child Care Assistance Program are met.

Application Process 401-01-20-15

(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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An application is the formal request for assistance using the [SFN 29](#), Crossroads Program Application. Individuals requesting Crossroads must complete and sign an application. The application must be submitted to the local county social service agency in which the [parent](#) resides, for processing. An unsigned application is not considered an application.

1. The application must be completed and signed by the parent, or parent of the minor parent. The [County Crossroads Worker](#) must assist the applicant, if necessary.
2. During the application process, the County Crossroads Worker must assess the parent's child care plans and needs.

NOTE: The [child care provider](#) must be licensed, registered, self-declared or an approved relative with the state of North Dakota.

3. The County Crossroads Worker must obtain verification of the parent's school enrollment and appropriate releases of information must be secured to allow contact with school personnel, if necessary.
4. The County Crossroads Worker must verify that the parent is receiving Child Care Assistance or has submitted an application for the Child Care Assistance Program (CCAP).
5. After the County Crossroads Worker has verified the parent is receiving CCAP or has submitted an application for CCAP, the County Crossroads Worker must forward the completed application to the North Dakota Department of Human Services for a decision.
6. The Public Assistance Division must provide the County Crossroads Worker and the applicant with a decision.

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- a. If the decision is 'approved', the County Crossroads Worker must ensure the Child Care Assistance Program application is processed.
 - b. If the decision is 'denied', the County Crossroads Worker will place the decision in the case file.
7. The Public Assistance Division must create and send a referral to the [Crossroads Case Manager](#).

Documentation Requirements 401-01-20-20
(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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County Agency

The [county agency](#) shall maintain a case file of all individuals who apply for the Crossroads Program. The case file shall include the following:

1. The Crossroads Program application;
2. The notification of decision received from the [Department](#);
3. Verification of school attendance;
4. Appropriate releases of information.

Department of Human Services

The Department shall maintain a case file of all individuals who apply for the Crossroads Program. The case file shall include the following:

1. The Crossroads Program application;
2. The notification of decision provided to the county;
3. [Education Plan](#);
4. Copies of semester evaluations.

Crossroads Supportive Services 401-01-20-25

(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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Within the limits described in this section, supportive services may be made available to a participant of the Crossroads Program. Supportive service cannot be provided without approval from the [Crossroads Case Manager](#) until the individual's [TANF](#) case has been approved.

All approved Crossroads supportive services are paid directly to the Crossroads [parent](#) or [child care provider](#) as applicable.

Following are allowable supportive services:

1. **Child Care Expenses** - Payment of child care expenses for Crossroads participants shall be paid based on policy of the Child Care Assistance Program Manual. (Refer to Section [400-28-40](#), Crossroads Families Eligibility).
2. **Transportation Assistance** - Transportation assistance not exceeding \$75.00 per month may be paid to a Crossroads parent, provided the parent is participating in the activities listed on the [Education Plan](#).

If transportation assistance is based on mileage, a monthly stipend or flat amount is not allowed. Instead, a mileage calculation must be identified on the Education Plan. Transportation assistance based on mileage is calculated by multiplying the number of actual or estimated miles required to support the individual's approved activity by \$0.45, the current reimbursement rate for travel under the Crossroads Program.

When public transportation or informal transportation arrangements are used, the participant must review their transportation needs and plan with the Crossroads Case Manager.

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If appropriate, the Crossroads Case Manager will approve the individual's plan.

Payments for Transportation Assistance are issued to the recipients utilizing the Vendor Payment process. State Crossroads Policy Staff are responsible for issuing these payments.

Notice of Program Termination 401-01-25

(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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At the time the [Department](#) determines the individual is no longer eligible for the Crossroads Program, the State Crossroads Policy staff must send notification to the [parent](#) in writing at least ten (10) working days prior to the date of termination, informing the parent their case will be closed. The notice shall include the reason(s) the service is being terminated. A copy of the notice will be sent to the [County Crossroads Worker](#).

A Crossroads Case must be closed when:

1. The parent has completed their high school education.
2. The parent has not completed their high school education but has stopped attending school.
3. The parent no longer has a child care need for the child.
4. The child no longer resides with the parent.
5. The parent moved out of the state.
6. The mail is returned and there is no forwarding address or has a forwarding address of out of state.
7. The parent requested their case be closed.
8. The parent is no longer eligible for the Child Care Assistance Program.
9. The parent will not be attending school during a full calendar month and is not employed or attending parenting classes. (e.g. School ends in May and the parent does not plan to be employed or attend parenting classes in June.)

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Upon receipt of the termination notice, the County Crossroads Worker shall:

- Provide the parent with appropriate referrals to other available assistance programs;
- Assist the parent in finding other resources; and
- Ensure eligibility for the Child Care Assistance Program is reviewed.

Appeals 401-01-30

Overview 401-01-30-05

(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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An individual may appeal an adverse action of Crossroads by submitting a signed written request to the agency within 30 days from the date of the notice of adverse action. An individual is not required to use [SFN 162](#) – Request for Hearing – when filing an appeal. However, the individual's request for a hearing must be made in writing and signed.

Fair Hearing Process 401-01-30-10

(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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When adverse action is taken against an individual in the Crossroads Program and the individual requests a fair hearing, the hearing will be conducted by the Office of Administrative Hearings in accordance with [N.D.A.C. § 75-01-03](#).

The following procedure should be followed when a Crossroads recipient requests a fair hearing:

1. If the individual submits their request to the county social service office, the request form should be date stamped upon receipt and both the envelope (the postmarked envelope is needed to determine the timeliness of the individual's request) and the Request for Hearing form should be immediately mailed to the DHS Appeals Supervisor at the address noted below;
2. If the individual hand delivers their request to the county, the request form should be:
 - a. Date stamped upon receipt, with a notation made on the form that it was hand delivered; and
 - b. Immediately mailed to the DHS Appeals Supervisor at the address noted below, along with a completed [SFN 1784](#), Appeal Background Report and pertinent documents relating to the appeal; and

NOTE: If a completed SFN 1784, Appeal Background Report is not submitted, County Crossroads Worker will be sent a form by the Appeals Supervisor requesting the report be completed and mailed, along with any other pertinent documents relating to the appeal, to:

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Appeals Supervisor
DHS Legal Advisory Unit
600 East Boulevard Avenue, Dept. 325
Bismarck, ND 58505-0250

The [County Crossroads Worker](#) must notify the DHS Legal Advisory Unit Appeals Supervisor if the appellant is represented by legal counsel to ensure that legal counsel is also provided for the county. However, if the County Crossroads Worker believes that legal counsel is necessary in cases where the appellant is not represented, a request with rationale for counsel must be sent to the DHS Legal Advisory Unit Appeals Supervisor at 600 East Boulevard Avenue, Dept. 325, Bismarck, ND 58505-0250.

Result of the Fair Hearing 401-01-30-15
(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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Upon receipt of the order, signed by the Executive Director of the
[Department](#):

- If the individual wins the appeal, benefits must be restored based on the appeal decision.
- In the event that an individual loses the appeal, the action taken remains in effect.

Forms Appendix 401-01-35

SFN 29, Crossroads Program Application 401-01-35-05 (Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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The [SFN 29](#) is the Crossroads Program Application. This application form must be completed and signed by the parent or parent of the minor parent, with assistance from the County Crossroads Worker if needed, and returned to the parent's local county social service agency.

**SFN 878, Crossroads Program Evaluation Form
401-01-35-10**

(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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[SFN 878](#) is an evaluation form to be completed by the Crossroads Case Manager with assistance from school personnel as needed. Evaluations must be completed for each semester that Crossroads funding is utilized, even if the client does not attend school the entire semester. It will be the Crossroads Case Manager's responsibility to complete this form and return a completed copy to the Policy Staff no later than two weeks following the semesters end.

NOTE: This includes the summer semester.

Request for Hearing 401-01-35-15
(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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[SFN 162](#), Request for Hearing form is used when a Crossroads Applicant or Recipient chooses to request a fair hearing due to action taken regarding Crossroads benefits.

This form is available through the Department of Human Services and may also be obtained electronically via E-Forms. (54kb pdf)

E-Forms are presented in Adobe Acrobat and require the Adobe Acrobat reader. If you do not currently have Adobe Acrobat reader installed, you may download a free copy by clicking the Get Adobe Reader icon below.

SFN 1784, Appeal Background Report 401-01-35-20
(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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The purpose of the [SFN 1784](#) is to advise the Appeals Supervisor of the reason for an appeal and the program(s) being affected by the appeal.

This form is available through the Department of Human Services and may also be obtained electronically via E-Forms. (78kb pdf)

E-Forms are presented in Adobe Acrobat and require the Adobe Acrobat reader. If you do not currently have Adobe Acrobat reader installed, you may download a free copy by clicking the Get Adobe Reader icon below

DN 18, Crossroads Program Brochure 401-01-35-25
(Revised 4/1/12 ML #3322)

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DN 18 is available through the Department of Human Services. It may also be printed locally using the link shown above.

The Crossroads Program brochure is presented in Adobe Acrobat and requires the Adobe Acrobat reader. If you do not currently have Adobe Acrobat reader installed, you may download a free copy by clicking the Get Adobe Reader icon below.